

"Piece By Piece -- Golgotha!"

Text: Mark 15:22, "And they bring Him unto the place, Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull."

Scripture: Mark 15:16-39

Tonight we come to the final ^{piece} ~~piece~~ in our Lenten puzzle, and it is piece that is shaped like a skull. It is Golgotha, a hill outside of Jerusalem on which the final act in the earthly life of Jesus took place. This was a place that was infamous for being the spot of execution for known criminals. It was here that the Romans exacted the final penalty for treason and all other forms of insurrection, directed at the Roman Empire. It was here that the Jewish authorities and the people demanded that He be taken and put to death.

Jesus had withstood the investigation of the Sanhedrin during the ~~early~~ night and the early morning hours. He had stood before Pilate and been examined. When it was determined that He was a Galilean He was taken to the palace of Herod, since Galileans were to be tried before the King of that region. But Herod was unwilling to do anything to Him and he sent Him back to Pilate. So once again He was interrogated before the Roman Procurator and all the while ~~xxx~~ some of the Jewish leaders were stirring up the people who shouted for His death. Finally Pilate in almost desperation, and unwilling to have a riot on his hands, released the prisoner Barrabas, scourged Jesus with a whip and turned Him over to the soldiers for execution.

What a sad and sorry spectacle Jesus must have made as He was led away to be prepared for His execution. Tired from lack of sleep, ~~xx~~ physically exhausted from the traveling from place to place under the prodding and poking of the Roman guards, as well as being physically exhausted from the beating at the hands of Pilate. Dirty and unkempt from being in confinement under very adverse conditions. All of these things must have made Him take on the appearance of an actual criminal.

Picture if you will, this man who did nothing but good. This man who healed, who cleansed, who had compassion, who was tender enough to weep at the death

of a dear friend. This man who did all that He could to show people how God loved them. He had to ~~stand~~ withstand the shame, the abuse, the abasement, the degradation, not to mention the cruelty of undeserved punishment. And then to hear the words from the mouth of this Roman leader, "The sentence ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ is that this man should be taken to a cross." And then to see Pilate turn to the guard and say, "Go soldier, and prepare the cross." We cannot properly fathom all of the suffering and abuse Jesus underwent in the short space of 18 hours or so.

After He went through the mockery by the soldiers in their barracks, He was given the burden of the cross beam of His instrument of death, and made to carry it through the streets of Jerusalem on the way to the hill of execution. But He was unable to do so, not because He was a sissy or a 98 pound weakling, But because He was physically exhausted from all of this. And so another man named Simon was pressed into service and carried it for Him. And we are told, "They bring Him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull."

is the
Golgotha, ~~was~~ Hebrew word for skull. It is used in Matthew and John as well. But Luke uses the Latin word "Calvary," in his Gospel. If you have ever seen picture of the place called Gordon's Calvary, you can understand why the hill would be called "Skull." It just resembles a skull.

But in all of this we can see that there are some things of significance. The use of a place resembling a skull for execution stands out very graphically. What is a skull? It is the bone that makes up the head of an individual. It contains the most wondrous organ of the human body that God created, the brain. Yet how much in the way of brains was being used when people felt threatened by a man whose only crime was to show love and compassion. Yet, if we were to be able to interview any of those who were involved I am sure they would have defended their position very vehemently. After all, wasn't He trying to be like God? But was He? Wasn't it more like He was trying to show them God?

And when we think of the head, we think of intelligence, of learning, and the

In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA

GOOD FRIDAY MARCH 28, 1975

THE REV. RALPH C. LINK, PASTOR
MRS. EUGENE STEPHENSON, ORGANIST
MR. RALPH COOPER, CHOIR DIRECTOR
JUDIE MARTE, RICKY VINROE - ACOLYTES

ORDER OF WORSHIP - HOLY COMMUNION - 7:30
PRELUDE MUSIC: "CALVARY" RODNEY
"COME SWEET DEATH" BACH

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN 158 "WHEN I SURVEY THE WONDERFUL CROSS"

*ABSCRIPTION - CHORAL AMEN

*CALL TO WORSHIP

*INVOCATION

*CALL TO COMMUNION - PAGE 32

*EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER *INSTITUTION *AGNUS DEI

THE HOLY COMMUNION (PLEASE RETAIN ELEMENTS UNTIL ALL ARE SERVED)

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

*DOXOLOGY

SCRIPTURE: MARK 15: 16-39

HYMN NO. 164 "IN THE CROSS OF CHRIST I GLORY"

OFFERTORY

OFFERTORY: "WERE YOU THERE?" SPIRITUAL

ANTHEM: "TO CALVARY" - ROGERS - SOLO - HOWARD BOLAM

SERMON: "PIECE BY PIECE - GOLGOTHA"

PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

*HYMN NO. 161 "BENEATH THE CROSS OF JESUS"

*BENEDICTION AND THREE FOLD AMEN

*POSTLUDE: "PROCESSIONAL FROM 'CRUCIFIXION'"

STAINER

--- *CONGREGATION STANDING ---

THE ACOLYTES AND DEACONS WILL SERVE COMMUNION AND WILL
SING "GOSPEL OF JOHN" HERB.

WE INVITE ALL CHRISTIANS, REGARDLESS OF DENOMINATION
TO PARTAKE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER WITH US. PLEASE
FILL OUT A COMMUNION CARD SO THAT OUR CHURCH'S RECORDS
WILL BE ACCURATE.

HAVE MANY OUT 2 ALL LEADER SERVICES.

IF VISITORS DESIRE TO RECEIVE CREDIT AT THEIR HOME
CHURCH, PUT THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF EITHER YOUR PASTOR
OR YOUR CHURCH ON THE BACK OF THE CARD AND IT WILL BE
FORWARDED.

DON'T FORGET OUR SHUT-INS AND SEND THEM A CARD OR PAY
THEM A VISIT.

JUDIE MARTE, MRS. BAUGHNIE, MRS. THELMA PICHOLAI - HILL

MRS. ANNETTA SNYDER IS NOW AT GREENVILLE HOME FOR THE
AGED.

WELCOME ALL VISITORS *****

ONE WONDERERS WHY A DAY THAT MEMORIALIZES TORTURE,
PAIN AND DEATH SHOULD BE CALLED GOOD FRIDAY. THE
ANSWER, OF COURSE, IS THAT THE GREATEST VALUES OF LIFE
DO NOT COME OUT OF THE FORTUITOUS AND THE EASY, BUT
OUT OF THE HARD AND THE DIFFICULT. CHRISTIANITY IS NO
SWEETLY TEXTURED FAITH BY WHICH ITS ADHERENTS ARE
CARRIED TO THE SKIES ON FLOWERY BEDS OF EASE. IT IS A
RIGOROUS FAITH, THE ESSENCE OF WHICH IS FOUND THROUGH
SELF-DENIAL AND SACRIFICE.

AND THOSE WHO MEET ITS CHALLENGES WILL FIND THAT
GOOD FRIDAY IS GOOD INDEED, BECAUSE BEHIND THIS
INSCRUTABLE UNIVERSE, FILLED AS IT IS WITH HARDSHIP AND
SUFFERING, THERE IS A GOOD GOD, ONE WHO CARES, ONE WHO
LOVES EVERY ONE OF US. THE BASIS OF THE GREAT MESSAGE
OF GOOD FRIDAY IS THIS: "GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT
HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOEVER BELIEVETH
IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE."

THIS IS PERHAPS ONE OF THE FEW GREATEST TRUTHS IN
THE WHOLE WORLD. DESPITE ALL OF THE SUFFERING, STRUGGLE,
DISAPPOINTMENT AND SORROW IN LIFE, THERE IS A GOD WHO
CARES, WHO UNDERSTANDS. HE ESTEEMS US SO HIGHLY THAT
HE GIVES US FREEDOM, AND IN THIS FREEDOM WE OFTEN HURT
OURSELVES. BUT THEN HE PICKS US UP AND LOVINGLY SUPPORTS
US IN OUR PAIN AND STRUGGLE.

"Piece By Piece -- Golgotha!"

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"And they bring Him unto the place Golgotha, which is being interpreted, The place of a skull."

Scripture: Mark 15:16-39

Last piece puzzle 4 lent shaped like skull

Golgotha/hill outside Jer/Js final act took place
spot of exec 4 crimin

Roms kill treas, insurrect, & Jews deman Js deth
Js invest by Sanhed, Pil. exam, Herod exam, back 2 Pil
Jews stir peop ask 4 deth

Pil let Barab go, scourge Js, turn over soldiers
How Js look from all this

Picture what He did & how lived

Pil say, "The sentence that this man B taken 2 cross

" 2 sold. "Go, soldier & prepare the cross."

Js mocked in barracks, carry cross, cannot & Simon

READ TEXT.

Gol. Heb for skull/Mt & Jn use/Lk Calvary = Latin

What Skull? Gordon Calvary

It bone of head of human contain most wondrous orgs

Yet how much brains used & peop threatened by man
do nothing but good?

If cud ask peop they defend action, "Wasn't He try B
like G? But was HE? Wasn't mor lik try show G?

When think hed, think of intell & larning

think abil think things thru

With evidence 500 peop+discips+women, peop try explai
away 2M yrs

Men try reason & cannot acppt Js Xp Bcause intellect
knew l tell them unbelievable

Irony Sav world put deth top hill shape lik that

which disting human from animals

HOW INTELLECT DESTROYED GOD IN FLESH

How tragic, yet if no tak place sumthin simil had hap

D. Kennedy this AM breakf, "That if you or I were
the only sinner in the world, Js Xp wud still hav
2 B sacrif 2 redeem us from sin."

(Illus. Polish Jew, Love of God) in flesh

On this blkst day hist G crea, wen G suff, die 4 us,

do not feel empty, grief, despair Bcause deth Js Xp?

& yet had 2 B, Bcause Jn 3:16, God so loved the world

Always sing, I tak O cross thy shad 4 my abid pl. I

ask no other sunsh than sunsh his face. Content 2

if world go by, 2 know no gain/loss. Sinful self

on v shame, glory all the cross.

MAY THAT CROSS ALWAYS BRING IN 2 perspec THA JA AT B

ACCLAIMED BY EA US AS, MY SAV. & MY KING, MY LORD

& MY GOD.

Shirley & Ralph Charles Link, Nancy Link, Dale with Lianne his wife, Lloyd Link with Karen his wife
 Jessica in front of Ralph C. Link
 Ethan and Alisha in front of R. Dale and Lianne Link (the eldest son & family)



SEP 56







Ralph C. Link
153 Keck Road
Sarver, Pa. 16055
(412) 352-1103

Born: April 9, 1929, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Married: December 15, 1951
Wife: Shirley Margaret Neill
Born: December 8, 1930, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Children: Ralph Dale Link, born May 11, 1955, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Lloyd Alan Link, born May 28, 1958, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Nancy Lynn Link, born March 15, 1961, Butler, Pa.

SCHOOLING:

Graduated from Perry High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.
June 1947

Lay Ministry School, Penn West Conference of United
Church of Christ, September 1965 to May 1969

Commissioned Lay Minister June 1969

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa.,
September 1970

Graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary May 1974

Ordained to Christian Ministry March 10, 1974

PASTORATES:

As Lay Minister: short term, 1 month or less in
various churches 1965 to 1967

Emlenton Lamartine Charge of United Church of Christ
1967 to 1969

Short term in various churches 1970 until Seminary
entrance July 1970

July 1970 to December 1973 Student Pastor at Trinity
Charge, New Bloomfield, Duncannon, Pa., Penn Central
Conference, United Church of Christ

December 1973 to present, St. Paul's United Church of
Christ, Butler, Pa., Penn West Conference, United
Church of Christ

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

OF

Ralph C. Link

I am the youngest of five children. I was born just prior to the onset of the Depression. Our family was very poor. My father was an alcoholic and my mother was a very religious person who was searching for the Lord. During my childhood she did her best to teach me the things of the Lord. Later in life she came to a personal relationship with Him.

I grew up in the Evangelical and Reformed Church where salvation by grace alone was not preached nor taught. I knew all about Jesus, what He did, how He lived, His miracles, His death and resurrection, but I didn't know Him personally.

My life had many ups and downs and all the while I was attending church and striving with my good works to please God. At a very low point in my life when we were deeply in debt and my wife and three children were all ill, I came to the crossroads. I watched a Billy Graham Crusade on television from some distant city and the message he preached seemed to be directed right at me. I wrestled with making that commitment to Christ, but didn't. The next afternoon and evening at work on the 4 to 12 shift I came to the conclusion that I needed to make that commitment to Christ. It seemed like there was no other choice if life was to have any meaning. That night when I came home from work at 1:00 A.M., I laid face down on the living room floor and told God that I couldn't live my life in my own strength and I accepted the gift of salvation from my Savior Jesus Christ. My life has never been the same.

Through several meaningful circumstances I was called by God to serve Him in the Christian Ministry and to help spread that wonderful message of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful and rewarding time it has been and I give Him all the praise for my salvation and the opportunity to serve Him.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

OF

Ralph C. Link

I believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired inerrant Word of God. I believe the Bible is the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and it is the final authority for the Christian faith and life.

I believe in one God, who is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ that He is true God and true man. I believe that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He lived in sinless life, that He performed the miracles recorded in Scripture, that He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, that He bodily arose from the dead, that He ascended on high where He is at the right hand of Almighty God as our intercessor.

I believe in the Holy Spirit and that He comes and indwells each believer at the time of conversion. I believe that He lives in each believer to lead, to instruct, and to convict so that a believer may live a more godly life.

I believe that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and through His resurrection, this is the only ground for justification and salvation for all who receive Him. A Lord and Savior and to such as receive Him, they are born of the Holy Spirit and become children of God.

I believe water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the Church but are not means of salvation.

I believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in the resurrection of the dead, for the believer to resurrection of life and joy with the Lord, for the unbeliever to resurrection of judgement and everlasting punishment.